

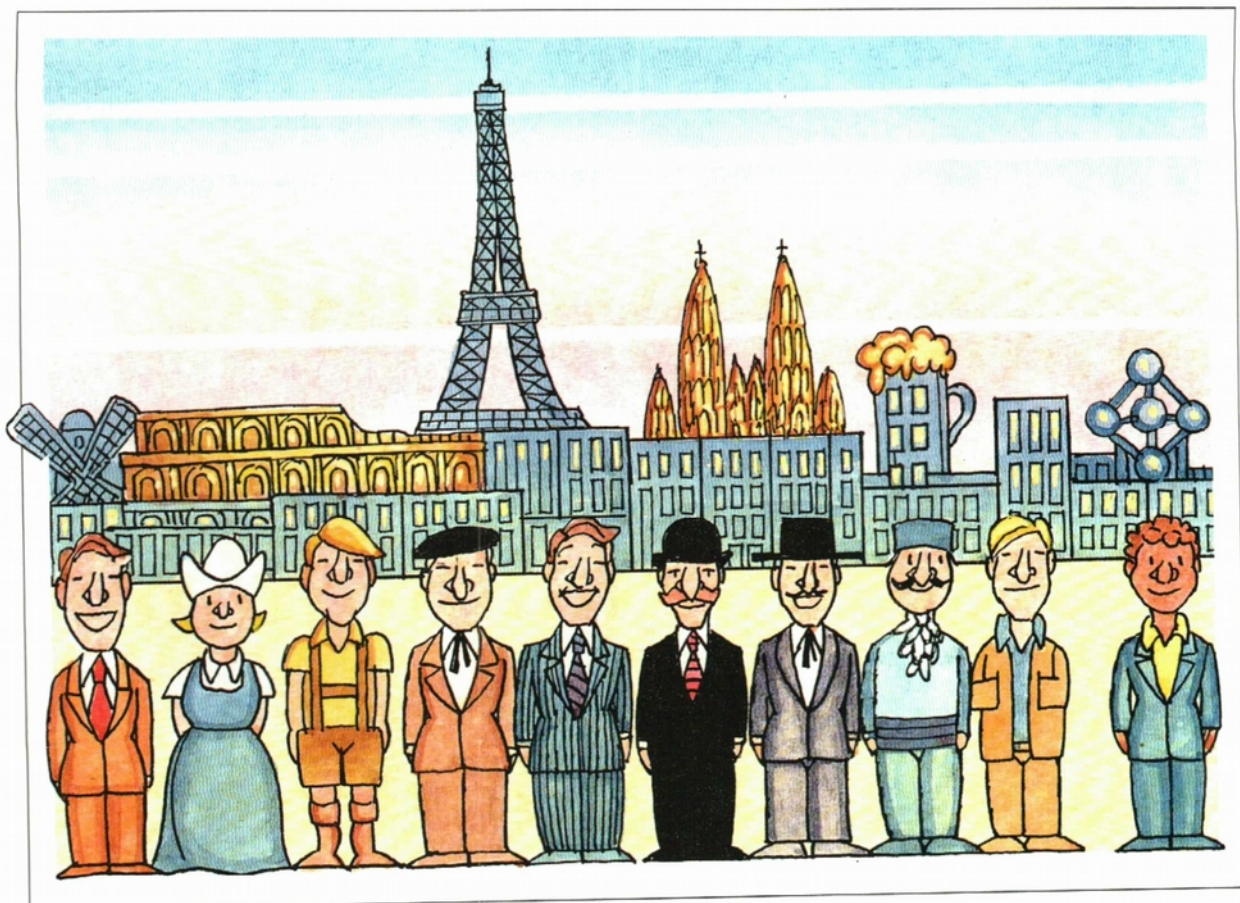
■ Los problemas del tercer mundo

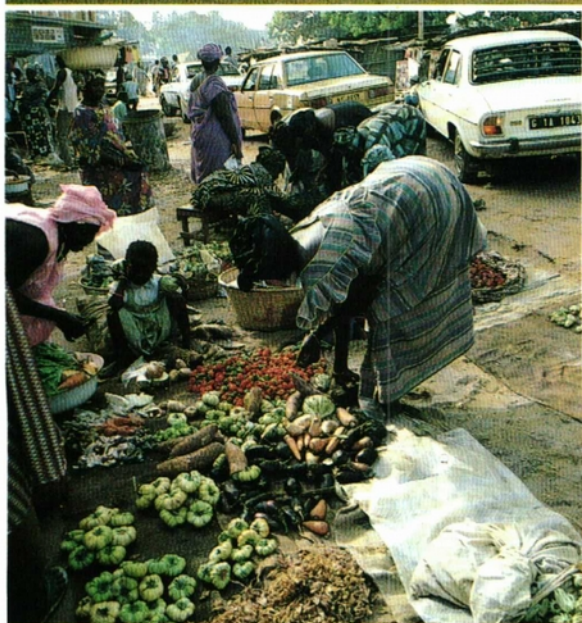
Niños que mueren de hambre, mujeres que se afanan en cultivar un terreno árido, calamidades que destruyen los ya escasos recursos naturales: estas son las imágenes que surgen más a menudo cuando se piensa en el tercer mundo. Imágenes que evocan una situación a la cual, lamentablemente, sólo estamos dispuestos a concederle algún momento, pero que para millones de seres humanos es una durísima realidad cotidiana. Por lo tanto, es justo dedicar por lo menos una Unidad a la actitud y a las responsabilidades de los países occidentales con respecto a las naciones menos desarrolladas. Escuchando las diversas opiniones manifestadas por los protagonistas de estas páginas, obviamente menos humorísticas que de costumbre, aprenderá a hablar en inglés de superpoblación, explotación, control de las materias primas, economía agrícola e industrial, hasta encarar temáticas como la política económica de la Comunidad Europea en relación con los problemas del subdesarrollo. Dado este contexto plurinacional, el tema gramatical propuesto es el de los sustantivos y los adjetivos que expresan nacionalidad. La sección Reading, además, le propone una comparación entre Oriente y Occidente: se trata de un fragmento tomado de la novela 'A Passage to India', de E. M. Forster.



UNIT 93

THIRD
LEVEL





Tres recorridos hacia la libertad

Liberia, Sierra Leona y Gambia, tres países costeros de África Occidental, han vivido de modo diferente la experiencia colonial. Los dos primeros nacieron de la operación destinada a repatriar a los esclavos liberados, a partir de finales del siglo XVIII. El nombre mismo de Liberia y el de Freetown recuerdan aquel decisivo rescate. En cambio, Gambia, pequeño estado anglófono en una zona de influencia francesa, obtuvo la independencia en 1965, después de haber vivido sucesivamente bajo el control de portugueses, holandeses e ingleses. En las fotos, las tres capitales: Monrovia (foto superior), Freetown (al lado) y Banjul (sobre estas líneas).

We did it. Why can't they?

In a pub somewhere in England, two men, George and Harry, are talking about the problems of the Third World. George, a student, believes that it is our duty to help the people there by sending aid, by training them and by giving them the tools they need to develop their economies. Harry feels that they have to do these things for themselves. Just as the countries in Europe and North America had to work hard to reach the standard of living they enjoy at the moment, so countries like Burma, Zaire and Bangladesh should learn that they are the ones responsible for their own development. Two very different points of view which, as you will see, lead to a fairly heated discussion!

Obviously, in the course of this Unit you are going to come across a number of 'nationality words': not just the names of countries themselves, but also the adjectives that are used for something which comes from those countries and the words used to talk about the people who come from them. This is an area which we have only looked at briefly in the past, and it's a fairly extensive area as well. In the GRAMMAR section of this Unit, however, you'll be able to find a whole section which is devoted entirely to the way nationality nouns and adjectives are formed in English.

Apart from these words, there is quite a lot of new vocabulary in the dialogue that takes place between George and Harry. Take the expression **to do some good**, for example: **It didn't do any good at all**. The novelty here, of course, is the way **good** is used as a noun. It means, of course, something that brings you an advantage.

Then there are a couple of colloquial expressions that come up quite a lot in spo-

An underdeveloped picture

George and Harry are in the middle of an argument about the problems of Third World countries and what the richer nations should do to help them — if anything!

Why should we have to help them? Nobody helped us when we were developing! ---

But that's not the point. When we were developing there weren't any rich nations around that controlled the world's markets. ---

What are you talking about, 'controlled the world's markets'? We don't compete with them, do we? I haven't noticed any bananas growing in England recently. Or coffee. Or pineapples. ---

But that's not the point. ---

What is the point, then? ---

Even though the rich nations don't produce the same things that they produce, they still fix the selling price. ---

Don't talk rubbish. ---

I'm not talking rubbish. It's true. In any case, agriculture in the Third World is all wrong. Most of it's in the hands of rich landowners who make the rest of the rural population work for a pittance. Do you know how much people earn in Bangladesh, for example? ---

I've no idea, but I'm sure you're going to tell me. ---

About \$ 145 a year. Do you know how much people in the rich countries earn on average? About \$ 13,000. ---

So what? ---

What do you mean, 'so what'? Doesn't that mean anything to you? Do you honestly think that's the right way to run the world? ---

Why shouldn't it be? Like I said, we got there first, didn't we? We had loads of problems when we were developing but no-one came along and said 'Here you are, mate, have a couple of billion dollars to help you get on your feet.' Anyway, look at what happened in the early eighties. We gave the Third World countries billions of pounds in loans and God knows what. It didn't do any good at all, and now they can't even pay them back. ---

Alright. Fair enough. I agree with you that throwing money at them maybe isn't the right way to solve the problem.

But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to help them. ---

So how are you going to help them, then? ---

Well, there's all sorts of ways. ---



ken English: **So what?** and **Fair enough**. The first is an expression you can use when you think that something which someone has just said is not very important or doesn't really affect you at all. The second expression is a way of admitting that something that someone has just said may be true, but it then allows you to qualify it: **Fair enough. I agree with you that throwing money at them maybe isn't the right way to solve the problem. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to help them.**



■ Meanwhile, on TV in New York

George and Harry's little argument actually took place because, in a few weeks' time, there's going to be an international conference on the problems of the Third World at the UN building in New York. In the period leading up to the conference, there are a number of chat shows on American TV which deal with the conference and the problems that the delegates are going to be discussing. The next dialogue you're going to hear is actually an excerpt from one of these, in which an interviewer talks to two women who will be taking part in the conference.

There is a rather interesting little word that the host comes up with here. Take a look at this sentence. **Exploitation by whom, exactly?** The word we're referring to, of course, is **whom**. As you can see from the context, this is actually a pronoun. It's not very common at all in spoken English, and tends to be reserved for fairly formal language. You'll be able to find out all about it in the GRAMMAR section.

Then there are a few verbs which you haven't seen before. The first appears in the very first sentence: **With the UN conference on the Third World coming up in just three weeks' time...** The verb to come up in this sense is quite simply a synonym of **to be about to happen**. And when you are **worse off** than someone else, it means that you are in a worse position than they are; it is used especially to talk about someone's financial situation. Then there's **to approach**. This actually has three principal meanings: **to come near** (either in terms of space or time), **to talk to someone about something** (especially if you want to ask them for something) and **to deal with** or **to consider**. Obviously, it is the last definition that is important in this context. The last verb which is new to you is **to outline**. When someone **outlines** something, they describe it in a very general way, without going into very much detail.

Finally, let's have a look at one of Dr Russell's sentences: **However, there is widespread disagreement about how we can solve these problems, and I think this should be the most important aim of this conference: to come to an agreement about the ways and means to be used in order to put a stop to famine and exploitation in the Third World.** Here there are

Two key figures

In a New York TV studio, two people are being interviewed about the future conference on the Third World. Notice how the host uses the pronoun **whom**:

With the UN conference on the Third World coming up in just three weeks' time, we've invited two key figures to our studios to look into the problems that are afflicting the countries in Africa and Asia which are worse off than ourselves. First, Dr Russell, the US ambassador to the UN and a well-known expert on the Third World...

Good evening. ---

And Rosalind Murray from the British group InterAid.

Ms Murray will be taking part in the conference. ---

Good evening. ---

Dr Russell, what do you think are the problems that need to be approached at this conference? ---

Well, I don't think it's necessary to outline in detail the problems that are affecting the Third World: overpopulation, natural disasters, political instability, the inadequacy of their agriculture, and so on. Everybody knows about these. However, there is widespread disagreement about how we can solve these problems, and I think this should be the most important aim of this conference: to come to an agreement about the ways and means to be used in order to put a stop to famine and exploitation in the Third World. ---

Exploitation by whom, exactly? ---

By us, among others. ---

By us? You mean the USA? ---

No, not just the USA. I mean all the richer countries. The rich north, as opposed to the poor south. ---

What do you mean exactly by exploitation? ---

Well, in my opinion, one of the biggest crimes that is being perpetrated at the moment is the way that world trade is arranged. ---

What's wrong with it? ---

It is designed to increase the wealth of the countries that are already rich and keep the poor countries poor. ---

That's interesting. I'd like to go into the way that works in a moment. First of all, though, I'd like to ask Ms Murray if she agrees with Dr Russell about this. ---

Oh, absolutely. And I also agree that it is the most important problem. However, I feel that this conference can do little or nothing to change it. ---

Why is that exactly? ---

Well, before going into it, I think we should perhaps tell your viewers exactly how the mechanisms of world trade work. ---

actually four words which are quite new to you: **widespread**, **aim**, **famine** and **exploitation**. **Widespread** is easy to work out, because it's made from the two words **wide** and **to spread**, both of which you've seen in the past. So when Dr Russell says that there is **widespread disagreement**, she actually means that almost everybody disagrees about how to solve the problems of

the Third World. **Aim** shouldn't be too difficult, either: it's a synonym of **objective**. **Famine**, which can be either countable or uncountable, is what happens when a lot of people in one area haven't got enough food to eat, and **exploitation** is a noun which describes what happens when one person uses another person for their own profit.

Money makes the world go round

Dr Russell's explanation of how the rich countries of the northern hemisphere control the world's trade is rich in useful verbs. Let's take a look at them one by one.

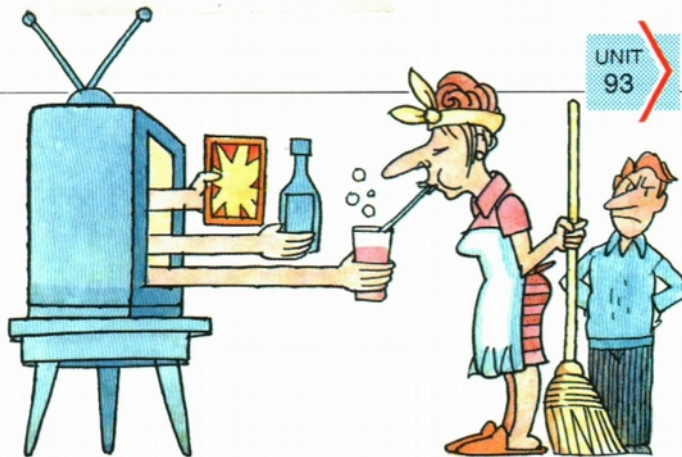
The first is **to bring something up**, which actually appears in the first sentence: **Dr Russell, you were the first one to bring this point up**. When you **bring something up**, you mention it or bring it to someone's attention.

Another two interesting expressions appear in this sentence: **But if you haven't got any money to start with, then it's virtually impossible to break out of the vicious circle**. The first, of course, is **to start with**. **To start with** is not really a verb at all, even though it obviously comes from one. It's actually a little phrase which means **at the beginning**. And when you **break out of something**, it means that you **escape** from it.

The next verb to look at is **to suit**. Now, you've already seen this a long time ago (in Unit 11, in fact!), when we were looking at clothes (**Does this dress suit me?**). But this verb can also be used in a metaphoric sense. When Dr Russell says that the present situation **suits** the richer countries of the northern hemisphere, she wants to say that it is a situation which they find very convenient or advantageous.



Later on, the host comes up with another couple of phrasal verbs: **So the richer countries could actually blackmail Ghana into keeping its price low by playing it off against other Third World countries?** Now, **blackmail** is actually the practice of obtaining money by the use of threats. So if you **blackmail somebody into** doing something, it means that you use threats (usually dishonest or unfair threats) to make them do it. And when you **play somebody off against** somebody else, it means that you put two or more people (or, in this case, two or more countries) in opposition to one another so that you can obtain some advantage.



Cocoa from Ghana, profits in the UK

Listen now to Dr Russell explaining how the rich countries control world trade. Then repeat:

Okay. Dr Russell, you were the first one to bring this point up. What did you mean exactly when you said that the rich nations 'control world trade'? ----

Well, the situation is quite complicated, but I'll try to put it as simply as I can. First of all, we have to remember that Third World countries have one big disadvantage. They are starting from a position of inferiority. ----

Inferiority in what sense? ----

In virtually every sense. You see, to develop an economy you need two basic things: money and skills. If you've got money, you can invest it in developing skills, and skilled people in the economy naturally create more wealth. But if you haven't got any money to start with, then it's virtually impossible to break out of the vicious circle. ----

But can't they produce money by selling their goods abroad? ----

Yes, they can. But the only thing they can sell abroad is raw materials — and in particular agricultural produce. This suits the richer countries perfectly. English, French and Swiss chocolate manufacturers, for example, buy enormous amounts of cocoa from Ghana. ----

So what's the problem? ----

The problem is that there are too many raw materials being produced. As a result, it is the people who buy them — in this case, the richer countries — who decide exactly how much they are going to pay. And, of course, as every good manager knows, it's important to keep your costs as low as possible. So rich countries pay very low prices for these goods. ----

I see. But why don't Third World countries just raise their prices? Why doesn't Ghana, for example, just double the price of its cocoa? ----

Because if it did, nobody would buy it. They could buy it from Malaysia, the Ivory Coast, or Nigeria. ----

So the richer countries could actually blackmail Ghana into keeping its price low by playing it off against other Third World countries? ----

Exactly. And if Ghana continued to keep its prices high, its economy would collapse, and it would be in an even worse state than before. ----

Okay. So the natural question to ask now is this: why don't, let's say, all the cocoa producers of the world get together and decide to fix the price of cocoa? ----

■ Making chocolate properly

The next dialogue you're going to hear is a continuation of the discussion between the host of the chat show and Dr Russell about world trade and how it affects the countries

of the Third World. Once again, you'll find a lot of new vocabulary here, but this time there are more new nouns and adjectives than verbs.

Some of these shouldn't be difficult to interpret at all. There are words like **sophisticated**, **hemisphere** and **cotton**, which are very similar to Spanish words and, in these cases at least, mean more or less the same thing. Others might be a little more difficult, but you should be able to work them out by looking closely at the context: **dictator**, in-

dustrialist and **tariff barrier**, for example.

To get at the meaning of words like **displeasing** and **retirement**, on the other hand, you'll have to look closely at the way the word is constructed. **Displeasing**, for example, is obviously the gerund of a verb, **to displease**. And if you remember that the prefix **dis-** is used to turn a verb or a noun into its opposite, you shouldn't have too many problems discovering what **displeasing** actually means. You can do the same thing with **retirement**. You know, for example, what **to retire** means, and you know that the suffix **-ment** can change a verb into a noun. So, once again, it won't be too difficult for you to get at the meaning of this word.

That actually leaves you with just a few terms that you haven't seen before. Once again, however, you can use the context to help you here. What about **bitter plain chocolate** for example? Ask yourself what kinds of chocolate it is possible to have and you already have a clue. Add to that the fact that Dr Russell mentions **milk chocolate** immediately before, and you shouldn't be too far away from the right answer: **bitter** is the opposite of **sweet** and **plain chocolate** is dark chocolate made without milk and with very little sugar.

Finally, a word about the host's last sentence. He actually comes up with a rather strange little phrase: **Catch 22 situation**. Now, **Catch 22** is the name of a famous book written by the American author Joseph Heller. In it he described the situation of a group of American pilots during World War Two. According to the regulations, they were allowed to go home after a certain number of raids on Germany. But when one of them came near to reaching the number required, they discovered that the regulations had been changed and the number was now much higher than before! The title of the book quickly found its way into the language and is now used to describe any situation from which it is impossible to escape because there is something in the situation itself which doesn't allow it.

Catch 22

In this dialogue, you'll find a lot of 'nationality words'. Pay close attention to them:

That is, of course, the logical thing to do. The OPEC countries do exactly the same with oil. But there are problems here. Unless you have very strong leadership — which usually means a group of dictators, or something very close to it — it just doesn't work. One country is always tempted to capitalize on the situation by reducing its prices a little. ---

So that everybody buys the product from them. ---

That's right. And then, of course, all the other Third World countries have to do the same, and you're back at square one. ---

Okay. So here's the next question. Why don't the Ghanaians just start making chocolate themselves, and start exporting it? Why don't they make the move from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy? ---

Because they haven't got the money to do it properly. The markets that really count — those in the rich northern hemisphere — are very sophisticated. You have to produce milk chocolate for Great Britain, bitter plain chocolate for the French, chocolate that tastes of peanuts for the Americans, and so on. Ghana just doesn't have the money to invest in sophisticated machinery which can do that for them. ---

I see. ---

But there's another reason. What would happen if Ghana started selling chocolate in the UK, for example, for half the price that British manufactures can sell it for? ---

I imagine that the British chocolate manufacturers would put a lot of pressure on the government to raise the tariff barriers. ---

Exactly. And what politician is going to run the risk of displeasing the industrialists of his native country so that he can protect a foreign one — particularly one from the Third World with no international power at all? ---

At the next election he'd probably be forced into retirement. ---

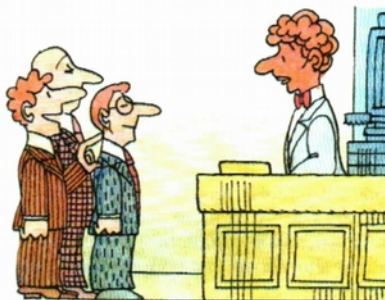
Precisely. ---

So what you're saying, then, is that it's practically impossible for a Third World country to develop? ---

That's right. What we said about cocoa from Ghana is just as true for rice from India, tea from Ceylon, cotton from Chad, and peanuts from Senegal. ---

So it's a Catch 22 situation. ---

Exactly! ---



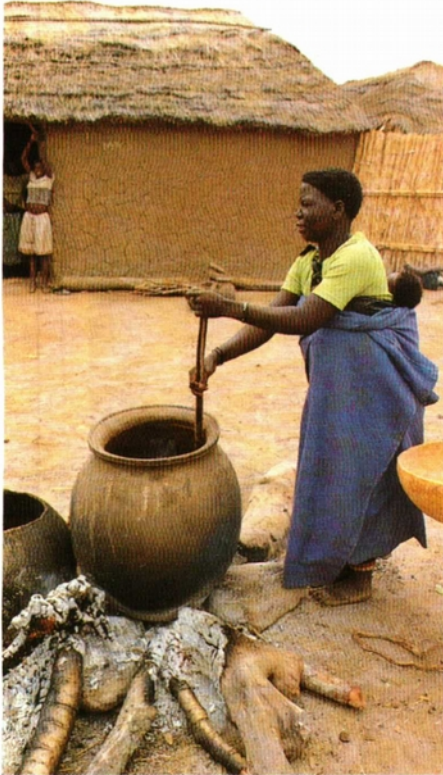


Mejor Ghana que Costa de Oro

Como lo sugiere su nombre, Costa de Oro, fue precisamente el precioso metal el que atrajo a los europeos a esta colonia británica. Pero fue otro comercio, mucho más innoble, el que enriqueció a mercaderes sin escrúpulos: la trata de esclavos, que los ingleses no declararon ilegal hasta fines del siglo XVIII. Por lo tanto, pueden intuirse los sentimientos de justificado orgullo y de desprecio que llevaron al primer gobierno independiente, en 1957, a repudiar el nombre colonial sustituyéndolo por el mucho más significativo de Ghana. Así se llamaba, en efecto, el glorioso imperio africano que entre los siglos VI y XIII ocupó los actuales territorios de Senegal, Mali y Guinea Septentrional. En las imágenes, poblados de la tribu Tchi, en Ghana.

Nigeria, la nación más poblada

En Nigeria, uno de los principales países de África, viven casi 100 millones de personas. Tal nivel demográfico ha sido alcanzado en parte por la fuerte inmigración de los últimos decenios, procedente del poblado Valle del Níger, región dotada de excelentes condiciones naturales. También el subsuelo nigeriano es rico en recursos, y el valioso petróleo es el primero de ellos. Lamentablemente, el patrimonio natural no ha bastado para preservar el país de gravísimas crisis económicas. Los ambiciosos proyectos de inversiones de la década de los setenta han tenido que ser sometidos a drásticas revisiones. En las fotos, diversos aspectos de la naturaleza y de las tradiciones de Nigeria.

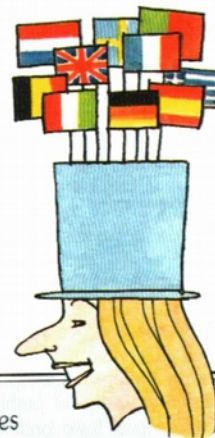


Where does the EEC stand?

As you've already seen, when English or American people speak, they tend to divide their sentences up into sections. Sometimes, as you saw in the last two Units, these sections (called rhythmic units) contain one or two accented syllables. More rarely, they contain three or even four syllables. In this Unit, we're going to be paying particular attention to rhythmic units which contain three accented syllables.

There are quite a lot of these, but there are five in particular that recur more frequently than the rest. The first is made up of three stressed syllables and three unstressed syllables which alternate: **We need to work them out.** The second contains an unstressed syllable, a stressed syllable, two unstressed syllables, a stressed syllable, another two unstressed syllables, and a final stressed syllable: **The African Congress of States.** The third type is the same as the second type, except that there are three

unstressed syllables before the second and third stressed syllables: **the terrifying famine in the east.** The fourth type is the same as the first type, except that it has an unstressed syllable added: **We never ever solved it.** And the last is the same as the second type, except that it has two unstressed syllables added on the end: **the man in the chair at the conference.** You'll find quite a lot of examples of these units in the dialogue that follows, in which the host of our chat show turns to Rosalind Murray to ask her about the position of the European Community on aid to the Third World.



Community Policies

The host of the chat show now turns to Ms Murray to find out about the position of the EEC. Listen carefully to the pattern of the stresses here:

Ms Murray, a lot of attention has been focused on the position off Europe recently — at least as far as the Third World is concerned. Can you tell us how your group sees the position of the European Community?

Yes. Well, the European Community is actually in a very strange position. You see, even though the EEC supports this conference and says it will do its best to help the Third World find a solution to its problems, it also supports some trading policies which are clearly harmful to Third World countries. And is European unification going to have any effect on those policies?

As far as we can see, no, it isn't. The policies are still there, and as far as I can see they are going to stay there. There has always been a lot of argument about the problem of our agricultural policy for example, but we've never ever solved it, and I don't think we ever will.

What about the positions of the EC member countries regarding the Third World?

We need to work them out. There is no single approach to the problem at all. Once of the delegates at the recent meeting of the African Congress of States mentioned that it was impossible to see where Europe stands as a whole, and the situation hasn't really changed since then. Each member seems to go its own way as far as the Third World is concerned.

But during the terrifying famine in the east — in East Africa, I mean — didn't the EC send aid to the peoples of Ethiopia, Somalia, and so on?

Yes, but it was mainly sponsored by private organizations, not by the EEC as a whole.

You seem to have a rather pessimistic attitude to the problem.

Yes, I'm afraid I have. Especially as the man in the chair at this conference is an European.

Do you agree with Ms Murray, Dr Russell?

Well, not entirely. It's true that there are some anomalies in the position of the EC on Third World aid, but some moves are being made to find some kind of common policy. And even in the chairman of this conference, Dr Michael Harmon, is a European, he has a very good record in this area.

Sing for their supper

In recent years, raising money for charity has become something of a fashion. Walks, marathons, bike rides, even creating precariously high piles of money are all techniques that have been used to encourage people to donate money to aid organizations. But the most profitable, and bestknown, event of all occurred on the night of July 13, 1985 — Live Aid.

Simultaneously, from stadiums in Philadelphia and London, two rock concerts took place which captured the imaginations — and the hearts — of the world. 60 rock stars performed, and the concerts were transmitted via 12 satellites to 1,600,000,000 people. In the weeks and months that followed, approximately £ 100,000,000 was given to aid people dying of famine in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

Since then, many other similar events have taken place and rock stars, sportsmen and other celebrities take part in them almost as a matter of course. But nothing has ever come near to recapturing the magic of that night in 1985, when people all over the world held out a helping hand to those in need.

La conferencia de la ONU

El gran momento ha llegado y en el 'edificio de cristal' de la ONU, en New York, está a punto de iniciarse la conferencia sobre los problemas del tercer mundo. Pero desde antes del comienzo, entre los representantes de los países subdesarrollados hay motivos de descontento en relación a los temas previstos por el orden del día. Considerando que la conferencia sólo tendrá sentido si se da preferencia a las cuestiones más candentes, como el problema de la superpoblación o el trato preferencial a los países pobres en las relaciones comerciales, ya durante los primeros contactos algunos delegados intentan modificar el temario.

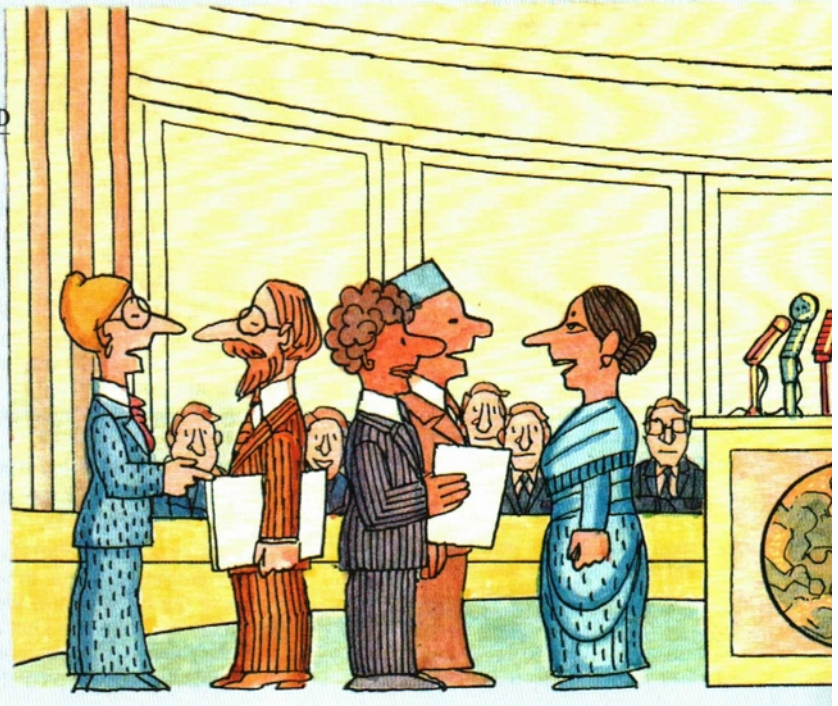
La segunda conversación también se desarrolla antes del comienzo de la conferencia y en ella vemos a dos de los organizadores, un americano y un inglés, en el momento de asignar la ubicación a las delegaciones de los diferentes estados del mundo. También en este fragmento reina la aprensión: se trata, una vez más, de conciliar las exigencias de todos, pero evitando tensiones e incidentes diplomáticos.

De los vocablos que escuchará, sólo merecen un comentario **overpopulation**, que significa 'superpoblación', y **agenda**, que quiere decir 'orden del día'.

THE LAST WORD TO THE THIRD WORLD

- ~ Have you seen the agenda? ---
- ~ Yes. I'm rather upset about the fact that hardly any mention is made of the problems of overpopulation. ---
- ~ You're right. We must ask the chairman to have the agenda revised. It's absurd. ---
- ~ No, I'm not sure I agree with you. Don't you remember what happened at the last conference? There we spoke about overpopulation and it turned into a religious debate. ---
- ~ But it's impossible. You can't talk about feeding a population when you don't know how big your population is going to be in five years' time. ---
- ~ In any case, as far as I'm concerned the trade issue is much more important, and that isn't mentioned at all. ---

- ~ Are you surprised? The UN is run by the Americans and their European allies. We all know that. And they are perfectly happy with the way trade is arranged at the moment. ---
- ~ No, we must make some changes. I've already talked to the delegates from most of the African states — the Angolans, the Zimbabweans, the Zaireans and so on — and they all agree. We must change the pattern of trade if we want our countries to develop. ---
- ~ Most of the Asian countries feel the same. Except for the Chinese. And they do not think of themselves as part of the Third World in any case. ---
- ~ Why don't we open the conference by asking for a change in the agenda? ---
- ~ But the chairman will never allow it. ---
- ~ Why not? We're here to discuss the problems of the Third World, aren't we? Why shouldn't we discuss the problems which we feel are the most important? ---
- ~ Because they are not the problems which the US and Europe feel are most important. ---
- ~ Our old colonial masters, you mean? ---
- ~ I have an idea. If we are certain that we have the majority on this point, we can perhaps persuade Dr Harmon to change the agenda. I will have a word with him before the conference begins. He is an old friend. We were at Oxford together, you see. ---
- ~ Well, if you think that will help... ---
- ~ Who is the first speaker? ---
- ~ After Dr Harmon opens the conference, the Bangladesh delegate will present a report on the situation in Asia. ---
- ~ Good. Why don't we ask him to propose an immediate vote to change the agenda? ---
- ~ A good idea. I shall go and talk to him straight away. ---



CHANGING PLACES

- ~ Now then, Mr Wo. You're due to speak after the Moroccan delegate. He should finish at about 4.30. And Liet-San — you're speaking tomorrow morning at 10.00, after the Laotian delegate. Is that okay? ----
- ~ Yes, that's fine, thank you. ----
- ~ Excuse me. Where is my delegation supposed to be sitting, please? ----
- ~ Didn't you receive your card? ----
- ~ No. ----
- ~ I'm sorry, you are...? ----
- ~ Elizabeth Mbanga. ----
- ~ And you are from...? ----
- ~ Malawi. ----
- ~ Oh, yes, of course. Now, the Malawian delegation is sitting in the fifth row, next to the Japanese delegation. ----
- ~ Thank you. ----
- ~ Phew. This is hard work. ----
- ~ You're right. Did you get the seating order changed for the French? ----

A colony of mutineers

When we think of the British Empire we usually think of Third World countries being invaded and subjugated to provide raw materials and markets for the expanding economy of the mother country. But this was not always the case. On more than one occasion, British subjects colonized areas which before had been completely uninhabited.

The reasons for this were many: a desire for glory, for a warmer climate, even for a 'kingdom of one's own'. But the strangest event of this type was due not to a deliberate wish for colonization at all, but rather to a mutiny.

One morning in the spring of 1789, Captain Bligh, master of HMS Bounty, woke up to find a gun pointed at his head. At the other end of the gun was his second-in-command, Fletcher Christian. And behind him was the crew of the Bounty: during the night, they had mutinied, and a little after dawn they led the unfortunate Captain Bligh to one of the boats and put him over the edge, into the open sea.

By rebelling against the authority of their captain, Christian and the sailors had sealed their own fate: they would never be able to return to England. So, after col-

lecting provisions and 'wives' from the island of Tahiti, they set off to look for a new home where they wouldn't be found.

No-one knew what had happened to them until, in 1808, a ship called at the windblown little island of Pitcairn, in the South Pacific. The sailors discovered a group of copper-coloured islanders and a couple of older British inhabitants, the remnants of the crew from the Bounty. After sailing for four months, they had discovered the island and the crew decided to make it their home. They burnt the ship for safety. The community had rapidly descended into civil war, and seven of the crew, including Mr Christian, died violent deaths. There were few women, much drunkenness, and very poor government, so the initial stages of the community's life on the island was very violent indeed. But strangely, the copper-coloured descendants of the Bounty's mutineers settled down to become an innocent, peace-loving community of hymn-singing Puritans. In 1838, they became British subjects, and to this day the descendants of Fletcher Christian and his mutinous shipmates remain fiercely loyal to the British flag.



- ~ Yes, I did. God knows why they wanted to sit at the end. Anyway, we've now got the Swedes next to the French. Then come the Icelanders. Then the Luxembourgish. And finally the Dutch. ----
- ~ Okay. And who's in the row in front? ----
- ~ Well. In front of the French are the British, then the Italians, then the Germans, and finally the Belgians. ----
- ~ Good. Let's hope that's settled, then. When is Dr Harmon arriving? ----
- ~ In half an hour. He just called me from his hotel. ----
- ~ Well, let's hope we don't have any surprises like we did last time. When the Indians started talking about overpopulation and religion I just knew something bad was going to happen. ----
- ~ Don't worry. I've just had a word with the Indian delegate. She said she's not going to mention religion this time. ----

Adjetivos y sustantivos de nacionalidad

Se pueden distinguir cinco tipos de vocablos para definir el concepto de nacionalidad: el sustantivo que indica la nación (**Italy, England, Greece**); el adjetivo que define la nacionalidad (**Italian, English, Greek**); el nombre del idioma, que en muchos casos es igual al adjetivo de nacionalidad (**Italian, English, Greek**); el sustantivo que designa al ciudadano de una determinada nación (**an Italian, an Englishman, a Greek**), y el nombre colectivo referido

al pueblo, precedido a menudo por el artículo determinado (**the Italians, the English, the Greeks**). Todos estos términos requieren siempre la inicial mayúscula. Los sustantivos y los adjetivos que indican la pertenencia a una nación pueden subdividirse en tres grupos o clases.

El primer grupo. Está compuesto por adjetivos de nacionalidad y los sustantivos correspondientes que tienen la misma forma (salvo el agregado de una -s en los sustantivos colectivos). La mayor parte de ellos termina con el sufijo -an o -ian. También forman parte de este grupo los adjetivos y sustantivos de nacionalidad terminados en -ese y **Swiss**, que se diferencian de los anteriores sólo por el hecho de que el nombre colectivo no presenta la -s en el plural. He aquí un cuadro sinóptico:



ESTADO	ADJETIVO	SUSTANTIVO	SUSTANTIVO COLECTIVO
America	American	an American	the Americans
Czechoslovakia	Czech	a Czech	the Czechs
Belgium	Belgian	a Belgian	the Belgians
Germany	German	a German	the Germans
Greece	Greek	a Greek	the Greeks
India	Indian	an Indian	the Indians
Italy	Italian	an Italian	the Italians
Norway	Norwegian	a Norwegian	the Norwegians
Russia	Russian	a Russian	the Russians
China	Chinese	a Chinese	the Chinese
Portugal	Portuguese	a Portuguese	the Portuguese
Switzerland	Swiss	a Swiss	the Swiss

El segundo grupo. En esta sección, el adjetivo es diferente del sustantivo y el nombre colectivo es igual al sustantivo, pero presenta la -s plural. No obstante, también existen los sustantivos colectivos **the Danish, the Finnish, the Swedish**, iguales a los respectivos adjetivos utilizados como alternativa a **the**

Danes, the Finns, the Swedes. A propósito de Escocia, conviene precisar que además de **Scottish** también existe el adjetivo **Scotch**, pero usado con referencia a cosas y no a personas (**Scotch whisky**). Además, en lugar de **Scot** y **Scots** se pueden utilizar **Scotsman** y **Scotsmen**, respectivamente. He aquí un cuadro sinóptico:



ESTADO	ADJETIVO	SUSTANTIVO	SUSTANTIVO COLECTIVO
Denmark	Danish	a Dane	the Danes/the Danish
Finland	Finnish	a Finn	the Finns/the Finnish
Poland	Polish	a Pole	the Poles
Scotland	Scottish/Scotch	a Scot/Scotsman	the Scots/the Scotsmen
Sweden	Swedish	a Swede	the Swedes/the Swedish





El tercer grupo. Está caracterizado por el hecho de que el adjetivo y el nombre del pueblo coinciden, y es diferente el sustantivo que designa al ciudadano. También existen los sustantivos colectivos **the Britons** y **the Spaniards**, que son iguales al sustantivo que designa al ciudadano. El femenino y el plural de los sustantivos compuestos por el sufijo **-man** se obtienen sustituyendo éste por

-woman en el femenino y **-men** o **-women** en el plural (**an Englishman, an Englishwoman, Englishmen, Englishwomen**). Los sustantivos **Briton** y **Britisher** no se usan habitualmente; el primero aparece casi exclusivamente en los títulos de los periódicos, y el segundo se usa preferentemente fuera del Reino Unido, en América y en Australia. He aquí un cuadro sinóptico:

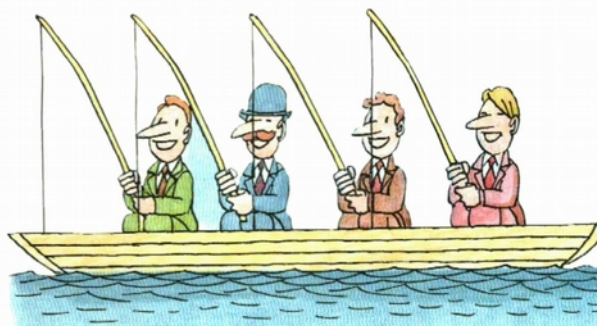


ESTADO	ADJETIVO	SUSTANTIVO	SUSTANTIVO COLECTIVO
Britain	British	Britisher/Briton	the British/the Britons
England	English	an Englishman	the English
France	French	a Frenchman	the French
Holland	Dutch	a Dutchman	the Dutch
Ireland	Irish	an Irishman	the Irish
Spain	Spanish	a Spaniard	the Spanish/the Spaniards
Wales	Welsh	a Welshman	the Welsh

El pronombre whom

El pronombre relativo e interrogativo **whom** es la forma correspondiente de **who** para el complemento directo y los complementos indirectos. Hoy, es utilizado en muy pocas ocasiones: solamente en la lengua escrita y en contextos formales. En el inglés moderno se ha sustituido por **who**. Observe que **whom** puede ir precedido por una preposición, mientras que con **who** la preposición se ubica, necesariamente, al final de la frase. Los siguientes ejemplos muestran la versión formal con **whom** y la corriente con **who**:

The woman **whom** you met comes from Ghana.
The woman (**who**) you met comes from Ghana.
This is the man to **whom** I gave your letter.
This is the man (**who**) I gave your letter to.
Whom did you see?
Who did you see?
With **whom** was she speaking?
Who was she speaking with?



En esta sección ha aprendido:

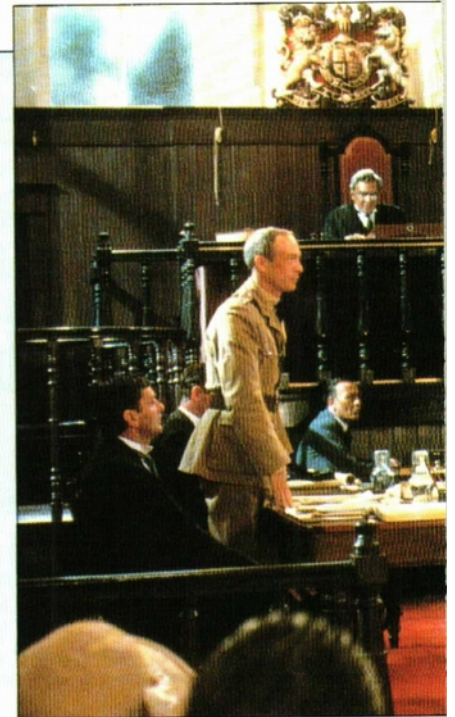
- los tres grupos de adjetivos y sustantivos de nacionalidad;
- el pronombre relativo e interrogativo **whom**.

Una comparación entre ingleses e indios

La India siempre ha fascinado a los escritores ingleses. El vasto subcontinente, tan diverso por cultura, tradiciones y religión, fue 'la joya de la Corona' del imperio británico desde 1876 hasta 1947, año en que obtuvo la independencia. Los años de la dominación inglesa llevaron a algunos escritores a formularse profundos interrogantes sobre la compleja relación existente entre colonizadores e indígenas. De los escritores que trataron de describir sin prejuicios la mentalidad india, hay que citar a Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1910), que

de sus numerosos viajes por Grecia, Italia e India, obtuvo inspiración para sus obras. Entre ellas deben citarse las novelas 'A Room with a View' (1908), 'Howard's End' (1910) y, naturalmente, la más famosa y acaso más lograda, 'A Passage to India' (1924), de la cual se ha extraído el fragmento que leerá.

Adela, la joven inglesa protagonista de la historia, quiere conocer verdaderamente la India y sus habitantes, pero durante una visita a las cuevas próximas a la ciudad de Chandrapore, se pierde y sufre un desmayo. Después de haber vuelto en sí, cree haber sido violada por el doctor Aziz, el médico local. Los prejuicios aumentan las sospechas hasta transformarlas en acusaciones, y el respetable indio es arrestado y procesado. La escena seleccionada se desarrolla durante el proceso, en el momento en que los ingleses entran en la sala.

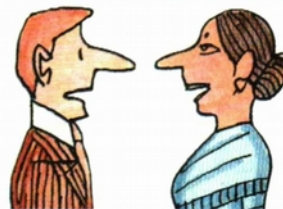


En las imágenes, algunas escenas de la película 'A Passage to India', dirigida por David Lean.



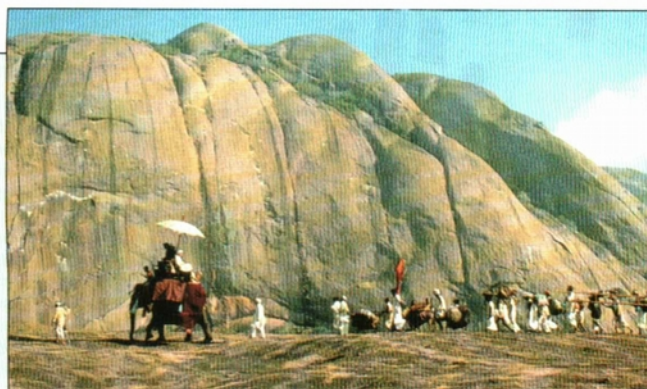
Their chairs preceded¹ them into the court, for it was important that they should look dignified². And when the chuprassies³ had made all ready they filed⁴ into the ramshackly⁵ room with a condescending⁶ air, as if it was a booth⁷ at a fair. The Collector⁸ made a small official joke as he sat down, at which his entourage⁹ smiled, and the Indians, who could not hear what he said, felt that some new cruelty¹⁰ was afoot¹¹, otherwise the sahibs would not chuckle¹².

The court was crowded¹³ and of course very hot, and the first person Adela noticed¹⁴ in it was the humblest¹⁵ of all who were present, a person who had no bearing



1. Preceded: precedieron.
2. For it was important that they should look dignified: porque era importante que parecieran dignos. Adverta que should look es subjuntivo.
3. Chuprassies: se trata de los mensajeros oficiales.

4. Filed: desfilaron.
5. Ramshackly: ruinosa, destartada.
6. With a condescending air: con aire condescendiente.
7. Booth: tenderete.
8. Collector: en la India imperial, era el magistrado de un distrito.
9. Entourage: séquito.
10. Cruelty: crueldad.
11. Afoot: en curso.
12. Otherwise the sahibs would not chuckle: de lo contrario, los sahibs no se habrían reído de modo despectivo. Sahib es el apelativo usado por los indios para definir a los europeos residentes en la India.
13. Crowded: abarrotada.
14. Adela noticed: que Adela notó.
15. Humblest: el más humilde.



officially¹⁶ upon the trial: the man who pulled the punkah¹⁷.

Almost naked, and splendidly formed¹⁸, he sat on a raised platform¹⁹ near the back, in the middle of the central gangway²⁰, and he caught her attention²¹ as she came in, and he seemed to control the proceedings²². He had the strength and beauty that sometimes come to flower in Indians of low birth²³. When that strange race nears the dust²⁴ and is condemned as untouchable²⁵, then nature remembers the physical perfection that she accomplished elsewhere²⁶, and throws out²⁷ a god — not many, but one here and there, to prove to society

how little its categories impress her²⁸. This man would have been notable²⁹ anywhere; among the thin-hammed, flat-chested mediocrities³⁰ of Chandrapore³¹ he stood out³² as divine, yet³³ he was of the city, its garbage had nourished him³⁴, he would end on its rubbishheaps³⁵. Pulling the rope towards him, relaxing³⁶ it rhythmically, sending swirls of air³⁷ over others³⁸, receiving none himself, he seemed apart from human destinies, a male Fate³⁹, a winnower of souls⁴⁰. Opposite him, also⁴¹ on a platform, sat the little Assistant Magistrate, cultivated⁴², self-conscious⁴³ and conscientious⁴⁴. The punkah-wallah⁴⁵ was none of these things; he scarcely knew that he existed and did not understand why the court was fuller than usual, indeed⁴⁶ he did not know that it was fuller than usual, didn't even know he worked a fan⁴⁷, though he thought he pulled a rope. Something in his aloofness⁴⁸ impressed the girl from middle-class England, and rebuked the narrowness of her sufferings⁴⁹. In virtue of what had she collected⁵⁰ this roomful⁵¹ of people together? Her particular brand of opinions⁵², and the suburban Jehovah who sanctified them⁵³ — by what right did they claim⁵⁴ so much importance in the world, and assume the title of civilization?

16. Had no bearing officially: no ocupaba ningún cargo oficial.

17. Punkah: es un gran abanico colgado del techo y accionado a mano. Se trata de un término anglo-indio.

18. Splendidly formed: de formas espléndidas.

19. Raised platform: tarima.

20. Gangway: pasaje. Es el espacio que hay entre los bancos del tribunal.

21. Caught her attention: llamó su atención.

22. Proceedings: debates.

23. Low birth: humilde procedencia.

24. Nears the dust: se acerca al polvo, es decir lleva una vida humilde y pobre.

25. Condemned as untouchable:

condenada como intocable.

26. She accomplished elsewhere: ha obtenido en otro lugar. Advierta que en este contexto el sustantivo nature está personificado.

27. Throws out: deja escapar, crea casualmente.

28. Impress her: la impresionan.

29. Notable: notable.

30. Thin-hammed, flat-chested mediocrities: mediocridades de muslos delgados y pecho plano.

31. Chandrapore: se trata de la ciudad del norte de la India donde tiene lugar el proceso.

32. Stood out: es el pasado del verbo irregular to stand out, que significa 'distinguirse', 'destacarse'.

33. Yet: sin embargo.

34. Its garbage had nourished him: había sido nutrido por su inmundicia.

35. Rubbishheaps: montones de basura.

36. Relaxing: aflojando.

37. Swirls of air: ráfaga de viento.

38. Over others: hacia los demás.

39. Fate: destino.

40. Winnower of souls: zarandeador de almas.

41. Also: también.

42. Cultivated: instruido, educado.

43. Self-conscious: cohibido, inseguro por no estar a gusto.

44. Conscientious: concienzudo, escrupuloso.

45. The punkah-wallah: es el término anglo-indio que se refiere al

encargado del punkah.

46. Indeed: en efecto, en realidad.

47. He worked a fan: (que) accionaba un abanico.

48. In his aloofness: en su alejamiento indiferente.

49. Rebuked the narrowness of her sufferings: (le) reprochó la estrechez de sus sufrimientos.

50. Collected: reunido.

51. Roomful: recinto colmado.

52. Brand of opinions: tipo de opiniones.

53. The suburban Jehovah who sanctified them: el Dios de mentalidad estrecha que las había santificado.

54. By what right did they claim: con qué derecho pretendían.



agenda	orden del día
aid	ayuda
aim	objetivo
Angolan	angoleño
anomaly	anomalía
(to) approach	tratar
(to) be tempted	ser tentados
bitter	amargo
cocoa	cacao
(to) collapse	derrumbarse
colonial	colonial
(to) come along	llegar
(to) come up	está a punto de suceder, ser citado
cotton	algodón
delegate	delegado
(to) develop	desarrollar
disadvantage	desventaja
disagreement	desacuerdo
(to) displace	disgustar

Synonyms and antonyms

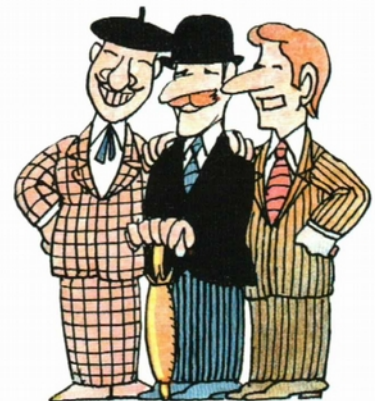
Como ya ha visto en esta Unidad, la expresión inglesa *to be worse off* define a alguien que se halla en condiciones económicas peores respecto a otra persona o respecto a una situación diferente: *The countries of South East Asia are much worse off, on average, than the countries of western Europe.* ¿Pero cómo se puede expresar el concepto opuesto, es decir describir una situación económica mejor si se la compara con otra? Simplemente sustituyendo *worse* por *better*: *Farmers in Canada are better off than farmers in India.* Naturalmente, se puede calificar *worse* o *better* con adverbios como *much*, *a little* y otros: *Workers in South Korea are much better off than workers in North Korea; University professors in China are a little worse off than university professors in Vietnam.*

Si no tiene que hacer una comparación, sino solamente decir que alguien vive desahogadamente, le bastará con sustituir *better* por *well*: *He's very well off; his father's got loads of tea plantations in Ceylon.* Y del mismo modo podrá decir que una persona no está en buena situación económica sustituyendo *well* por *badly*: *We're badly off, I'm afraid. My husband's unemployed at the moment.*

Sin salida

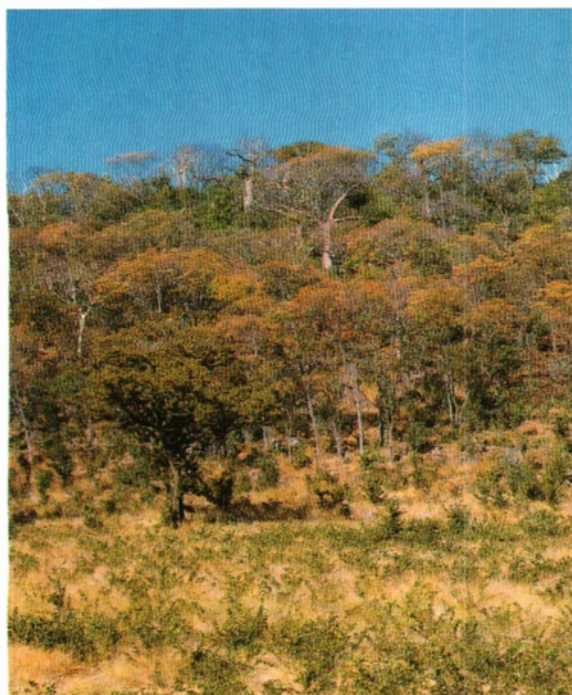
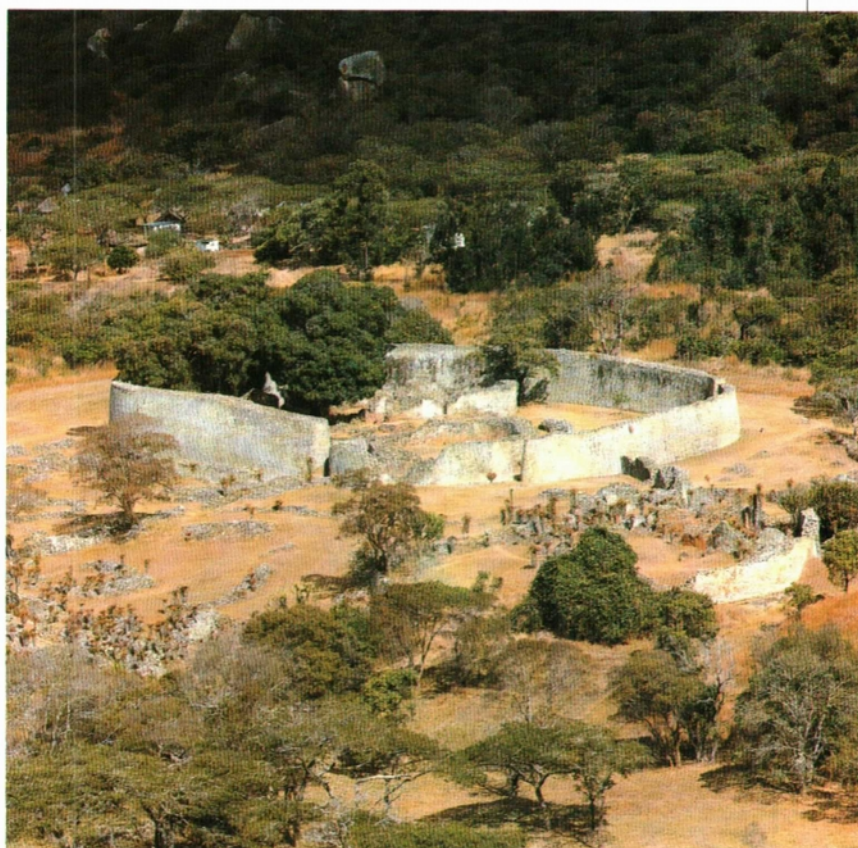
as a result	como consecuencia
as opposed to	en contraste con
(to) be back at square one	estar nuevamente en el punto de partida
(to) be forced into something	ser obligados a hacer algo
(to) be worse off than	estar en condiciones económicas peores que
(to) blackmail someone into doing something	obligar a alguien a hacer algo por medio del chantaje
(to) break out of	salir, evadir
(to) bring something up	mencionar, citar algo
(to) capitalize on something	sacar ventaja de algo
catch 22 situation	situación sin salida
(to) do some good	hacer el bien
fair enough	de acuerdo
(to) get on one's feet	ponerse de pie
(to) get together	estar juntos
(to) make the move	pasar a
(to) play someone off against someone else	poner una persona contra otra
(to) put pressure on someone	presionar a alguien
so what?	¿y entonces?
to start with	para empezar

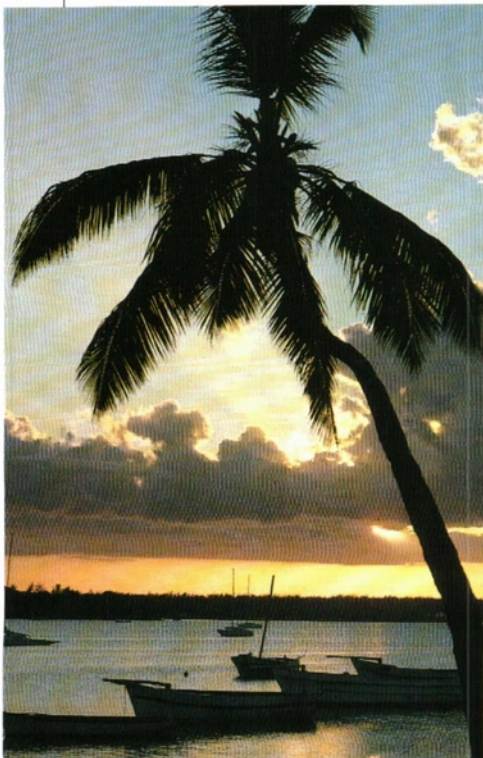
EC	Comunidad Económica Europea (USA)
EEC	Comunidad Económica Europea (GB)
exploitation	explotación
famine	carestía, hambre
(to) focus	concentrar
hemisphere	hemisferio
Icelander	islandés
Indian	indio
industrialist	industrial
landowner	terrateniente
Laotian	laosiano
loan	préstamo
Luxembourgais	luxemburgués
machinery	maquinarias
Malawian	de Malawi
master	dueño, patrón
means	medio, medios
mechanism	mecanismo
Moroccan	marroquí
(to) outline	delinear
overpopulation	superpoblación
pattern	estructura, modelo
pittance	miseria
plain chocolate	chocolate
produce	producto
raw material	materia prima
retirement	jubilación
(to) revise	revisar
rural	rural
selling price	precio de venta
skill	habilidad, capacidad
skilled	calificado, especializado
(to) solve	resolver
sophisticated	sofisticado
(to) suit	ir bien, convenir
UN	ONU
viewer	telespectador
widespread	difundido
Zairean	zaireño
Zimbabwean	zimbabuo



Tierra de bantúes y bosquimanos

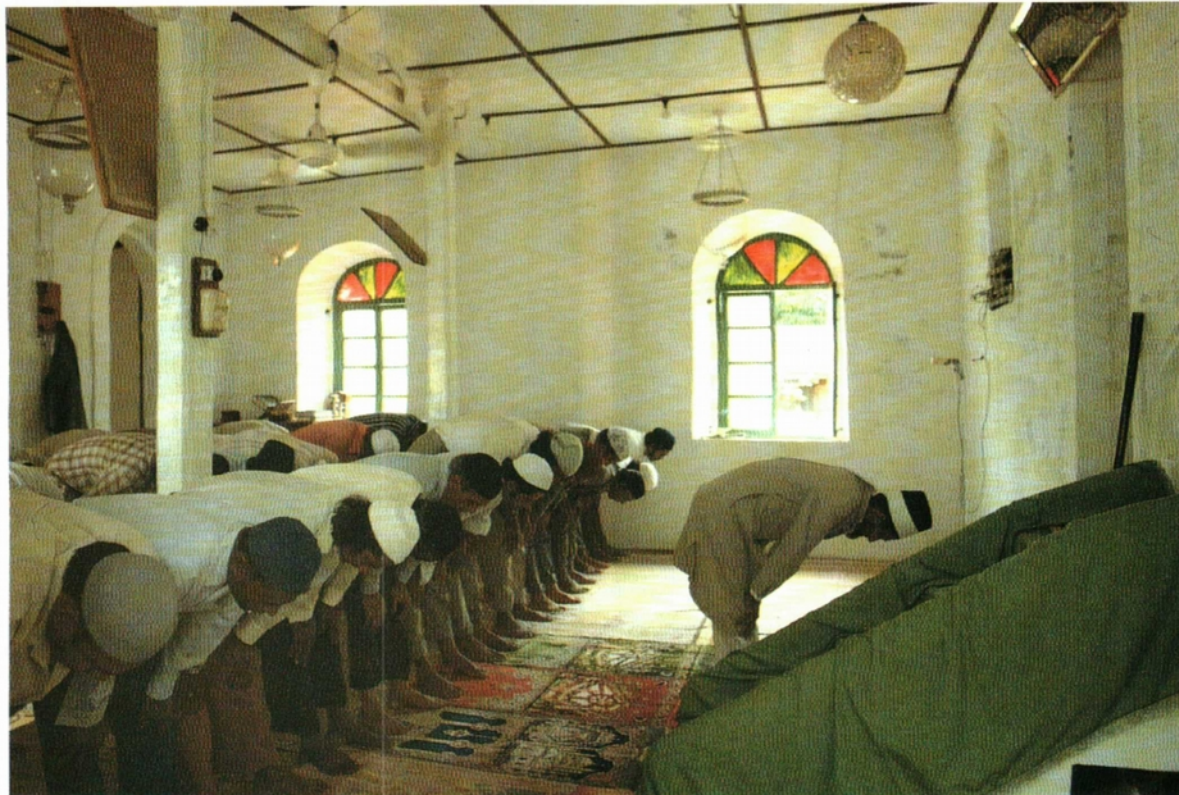
Las profundas raíces históricas del África negra se manifiestan en aquellos países que conservan las huellas de un pasado ilustre. Por ejemplo, Zimbabue (ex Rhodesia) lleva el nombre de una espléndida civilización bantú surgida en el siglo XV de la fusión de tres diferentes grupos tribales, dedicados respectivamente a la agricultura y el comercio, a la artesanía y al arte militar. También se llamaba Zimbabue la capital de un reino surgido en los primeros siglos de la era cristiana y cuya decadencia se produjo a partir del siglo XVIII. Sus ruinas pétreas (al lado y abajo a la derecha) constituyen uno de los complejos arquitectónicos más antiguos de toda el África negra. Sin embargo, antes de los bantúes, el territorio estuvo habitado por los bosquimanos, que han dejado algunos testimonios en el vecino Botswana (bajo estas líneas), donde habitan sus descendientes.





Mauricio es una isla sin pasado

La isla Mauricio (en las fotos), que surge en el océano Índico a 800 kilómetros de Madagascar, reúne un muestrario humano de increíble variedad: indios, criollos, negros, mestizos y hasta chinos. Esta extraordinaria mezcla de razas es fruto de una historia que se inició en la época colonial. Hasta el siglo XVI, la isla no había sido ocupada jamás por el hombre: fueron los europeos los primeros que la poblaron, introduciendo el cultivo de la caña de azúcar. Así llegaron centenares de miles de forzados, esclavos africanos y después jornaleros indios y comerciantes chinos. Junto a la confusión de razas, en la actualidad se advierte también una insólita mezcla de religiones.





Exercise 1

En estas frases sustituya **who** por **whom**, modificando el orden de las palabras donde sea necesario:

- Albert Luthuli was the man who they gave the Nobel peace prize to in 1960.
- Liet-San is the Kampuchean politician who we met at the UN conference.
- Dr Harmon is the man who they asked to be chairman.
- The Angolan delegate is the man who we have been waiting for.

Exercise 2

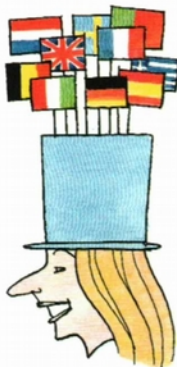
Con la ayuda de un buen diccionario, complete las frases siguientes añadiendo en los espacios vacíos los adjetivos de nacionalidad relativos al país entre paréntesis:

- Ho Chi Minh was a --- politician and poet. (Vietnam)
- U Thant was the --- politician who was the UN Secretary General from 1961 to 1971. (Burma)
- Alfred Nobel was the --- industrialist who established the Nobel prizes. (Sweden)
- Eva Peron was the --- woman who became President in 1974. (Argentina)
- Rembrandt was a --- painter. (Holland)
- Khaokor Galaxy is the --- boxer who became world featherweight champion in 1988. (Thailand)
- Jalal Akbar was an --- emperor who lived in the seventeenth century. (India)
- Sun Yat Sen was a --- revolutionary. (China)
- Albert Luthuli was an --- leader who was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1960. (Africa)

Exercise 3

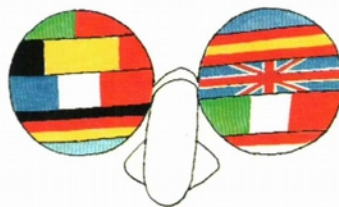
Complete las frases añadiendo en los espacios vacíos las expresiones verbales o los verbos hallados en esta Unidad.

- We need to help the Third World countries --- feet.
- All the loans we made to Latin America in the early Eighties didn't --- at all.
- The conference is --- in a few weeks' time.
- Many Third World countries --- now than they were ten years ago!
- Could you --- for us the situation in Senegal at the moment?
- We just have no idea how to --- the problem of food distribution.
- Is there anyway we can --- the vicious circle of overpopulation?
- The richer nations are --- the poorer nations --- supplying them with raw materials at low prices.
- What's more, they are --- these countries --- each other.



Exercise 4

Este ejercicio es un dictado tomado de la sección **READING**. Escuche toda la grabación, luego vuelva a escucharla y transcriba el fragmento aparte. Después compruebe lo que ha escrito con el texto que figura en las soluciones.



Exercise 5

Complete el esquema agregando en la primera columna el nombre de la nación, en la segunda el adjetivo de nacionalidad, en la tercera el sustantivo y en la cuarta el sustantivo colectivo. Agregue también el artículo determinado o indeterminado, donde sea necesario:

America	(1)	(2)	(3)
(4)	English	(5)	(6)
Wales	(7)	(8)	(9)
(10)	(11)	a Spaniard	(12)
(13)	(14)	(15)	the Dutch
(16)	Italian	(17)	(18)
Scotland	(19)	(20)	(21)
(22)	French	(23)	(24)
Switzerland	(25)	(26)	(27)
Russia	(28)	(29)	(30)
(31)	Chinese	(32)	(33)

SOLUCIÓN DE LOS EJERCICIOS

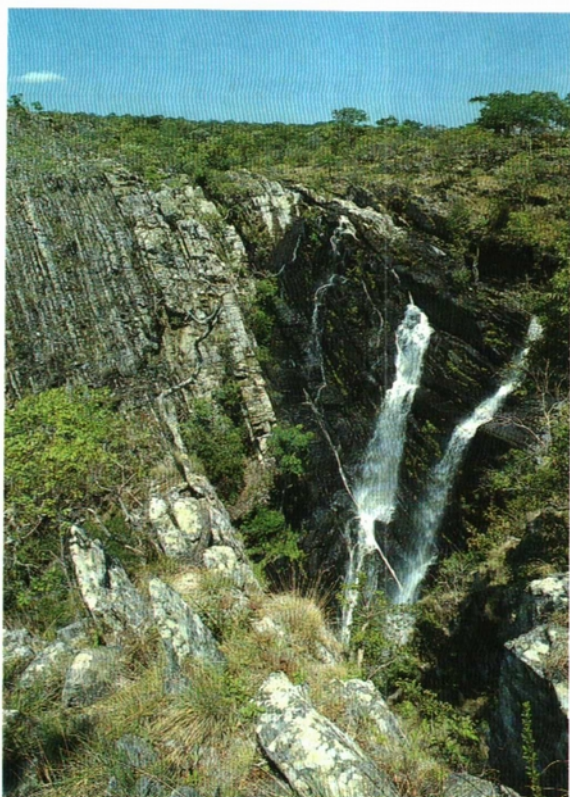
Exercise 5
1) American, 2) an American, 3) the Americans, 4) English, 5) an Englishman, 6) the English, 7) Welsh, 8) a Welshman, 9) the Welsh, 10) Spanish, 11) a Spaniard, 12) the Spaniards, 13) Italian, 14) an Italian, 15) the Italians, 16) French, 17) a Frenchman, 18) the French, 19) Scottish, 20) a Scot, 21) the Scots, 22) Swiss, 23) a Swiss, 24) the Swiss, 25) a Swiss, 26) a Swiss, 27) the Swiss, 28) Russian, 29) a Russian, 30) the Russians, 31) Chinese, 32) a Chinese, 33) the Chinese.

Exercise 4
He asked to be chairman. The Angolan delegate was the man whom we met at the UN conference. Dr Harmon is the man whom they gave the Nobel peace prize in 1960. Liet-San is the Kampuchean politician whom we met at the conference. Albert Luthuli was the man to whom they gave the Nobel peace prize in 1960. He had the strength and beauty that sometimes come to flower in Indians of low birth. When that strange race off against.

Exercise 3
a) to get on their, b) do any good, c) coming up, d) are worse off, e) outline, f) approach or solve, g) break out of, h) blackmailing, into, i) playing.

Exercise 2
a) Vietnamese, b) Burmese, c) Swedish, d) Argentine, e) Dutch, f) Thai, g) Indian, h) Chinese, i) African.

Exercise 1
a) Albert Luthuli was the man to whom they gave the Nobel peace prize in 1960. b) Liet-San is the Kampuchean politician whom we met at the UN conference. c) Dr Harmon is the man who they asked to be chairman. d) The Angolan delegate is the man who we have been waiting for.



De las cataratas sube el 'humo que truena'

Zambia ocupa la posición central del África austral, lejos de toda salida al mar. Su territorio está formado casi enteramente por la cuenca del Zambeze, uno de los ríos más importantes del continente. De una longitud total de 2.660 kilómetros, el curso de agua, que nace en la extremidad nordoccidental de Zambia, atraviesa Angola y vuelve a entrar en Zambia recorriéndola de norte a sur. Aquí toma la dirección de Mozambique y del océano Índico marcando, por un largo trecho, el límite entre Zambia y Zimbabwe. En esta parte de su recorrido, encajado entre profundas gargantas rocosas, el río forma las cataratas Victoria (en las fotos), que los indígenas llaman Mosi-oo-Tunya, es decir 'humo que truena'.

